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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/846,424	05/01/2001	Joseph Lee Shriver	38190/233578	4590

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EXAMINER

THAI, CANG G

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3629

DATE MAILED: 07/12/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/846,424

Applicant(s)

SHRIVER ET AL.

Examiner

Cang G. Thai

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 May 2001.
2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-29 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-29 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

1. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 08/02/2001 is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the examiner is considering the information disclosure statement.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter, which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 1-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 1, it is no clear what is the scope of the claimed invention and how the steps are implemented to achieve the scope of the claimed invention? Is it enhancing business development approach or maximizing the company market evaluation or launching a business. Applicant is recommended to insert an objective of the claimed invention in the preamble to improve clarity. A supply chain is not a proper scope of the claimed invention. It is not clear on a supply chain in the body of the claim and how it is related to the program management as mentioned in the preamble.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

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(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

5. Claims 1-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S.

Patent No. 6,901,430 (SMITH).

As for Claim 1, SMITH discloses a supply chain visibility system operably connected to a network for coordinating a supply chain of a plurality of parts to be assembled into a finished assembly for each of a plurality of effectivities, said parts supplied by a plurality of suppliers and received by at least one recipient, the supply chain visibility system comprising:

a plurality of graphical user interfaces associated with respective suppliers and the recipient and interconnected via the network, each graphical user interface capable of presenting {See Fig. 3, Element 316}:

a configuration panel operable to display a final configuration agreed to by the suppliers and the at least one recipient, said final configuration defining at least a portion of the finished assembly for which the parts need to be shipped {See Fig. 3, Element 324};

a template panel operable to display a common set of parts that are common to each of the plurality of effectivities, the common set of parts being those parts necessary to assemble the final configuration {See Fig. 3, Element 370};

a statement of work panel for each effectivity, each statement of work panel operable to display a final set of parts derived from the common set of parts, said

statement of work panel also operable to display a shipping status of the final set of parts {See Fig. 3, Element 364}; and

a shipment entry panel configured to receive shipping status data from the suppliers and the recipient, said shipping status data usable to update the shipping status of the final set of parts {See Fig. 4B, Element 446}; and

a processing element comparing the shipping status data received by the shipment entry panel to the shipping status of the final set of parts and updating the shipping status of the parts so that the suppliers and the recipient have all ongoing view of the shipping status of the final set of parts to permit assembly of the finished assembly to be planned accordingly {See Fig. 4B, Element 448}.

As for Claim 2, SMITH discloses the supply chain visibility system of Claim 1, further comprising an electronic mail dispatch system operable to dispatch electronic mail messages to the suppliers and the recipient, the electronic mail messages relating changes and entries submitted to via the graphical user interface {See Fig. 6, Element 342}.

As for Claim 3, SMITH discloses the supply chain visibility system of Claim 1, wherein the statement of work panel includes a plurality of fields displaying the shipping status of the final set of parts, said shipping status including a part number and an effectivity listing of each of the final set of parts {See Fig. 6, Element 346}.

As for Claim 4, SMITH discloses the supply chain visibility system of Claim 3, wherein the shipping status further includes discrepancy information on parts received

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but found to be inadequate by at least one of the recipient and the receiving supplier {See Fig. 7C, Element 644}.

As for Claim 5, SMITH discloses the supply chain visibility system of Claim 3, wherein each graphical user interface further comprises a return part panel configured to receive repair information on parts being returned to one of the suppliers for repair {See Fig. 13, Element 1026}.

As for Claim 6, SMITH discloses the supply chain visibility system of Claim 5, wherein said statement of work panel is configured to receive the repair information from the return part panel and to display the repair information {See Fig. 13, Element 1031}.

As for Claim 7, SMITH discloses the supply chain visibility system of Claim 3, wherein each graphical user interface further comprises a replacement part panel configured to receive information on parts that need to be replaced {See Fig. 13, Element 1028}.

As for Claim 8, SMITH discloses the supply chain visibility system of Claim 7, wherein said statement of work panel is configured to receive the replacement information from the replacement part panel and to display the replacement information {See Fig. 13, Element 1038}.

As for Claim 9, SMITH discloses the supply chain visibility system of Claim 1, wherein each graphical user interface further comprises a shipments in transit panel operable to display the shipping status of parts sent by the suppliers but not yet received {See Fig. 16, Element 630}.

As for Claim 10, SMITH discloses the supply chain visibility system of Claim 9, wherein said shipments in transit panel includes a link to contact information for a carrier to which the parts were submitted for shipment {See Fig. 16, Element 1160}.

As for Claim 11, SMITH discloses the supply chain visibility system of Claim 1, wherein each graphical user interface further comprises an estimated completion date panel configured to receive a revised completion date for supply of at least one of the parts and to add the revised completion date to the shipping status of the statement of work panel {See Fig. 17A, Element 1223}.

As for Claim 12, SMITH discloses the supply chain visibility system of Claim 1, wherein each graphical user interface further comprises a delinquency panel configured to display a list of late parts that have failed to arrive by a due date {See Fig. 17A, Element 1229}.

As for Claim 13, SMITH discloses the supply chain visibility system of Claim 1, wherein each graphical user interface further comprises a proposed configuration panel operable to display a proposed configuration agreed to by at least one supplier {See Fig. 17A, Element 1228}.

As for Claim 14, SMITH discloses the supply chain visibility system of Claim 13, wherein each graphical user interface further comprises a configuration release panel operable to change the proposed configuration, add due dates for the proposed configuration and finalize the proposed configuration into the final configuration {See Fig. 17B, Element 1227}.

As for Claim 15, SMITH discloses the supply chain visibility system of Claim 14, further comprising an electronic mail dispatch system operable to dispatch electronic mail messages relating to the proposed configuration and the final configuration {See Fig. 23, Element 1520}.

As for Claim 16, SMITH discloses a method of coordinating a supply chain of a plurality of parts to be assembled into a finished assembly for each of a plurality of effectivities said parts supplied by a plurality of suppliers and received by at least one recipient, each of the plurality of suppliers and the at least one recipient having a graphical user interface that is connected to and supplied information via a network, said method comprising:

displaying, using a configuration panel of each graphical user interface, a final configuration that defines a portion of the finished assembly for which the parts need to be shipped {Column 1, Lines 61-63, wherein this reads over "more consumers, for example, are now using the Internet to browse, comparison shop and order products on-line"};

displaying, using a template panel of each graphical user interfaces a common set of parts that are common to each of the plurality of effectivities, the common set of parts being those parts necessary to assemble the final configuration {Column 1, Lines 64-66, wherein this reads over "on-line shopping systems have made product information, including pricing and availability, readily available to consumers"};

generating a final set of parts by applying the common set of parts across each of the plurality of effectivities {Column 2, Lines 1-3, wherein this reads over "many

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retailers have established “electronic store fronts” to offer all kinds of products ranging from clothes and groceries to computers and automobiles”};

displaying, using a statement of work panel of each graphical user interface, a shipping status of the final set of parts {Column 2, Lines 28-30, wherein this reads over “order status information can then be obtained upon providing an order number and verification data”}; and

receiving shipping status data from the suppliers and the recipient and updating the shipping status of the final set of parts so that the suppliers and the recipient have an ongoing view of the shipping status of the final set of parts to permit assembly of the finished assembly to be planned accordingly {Column 2, Lines 31-33, wherein this reads over “product status and tracking information is available only after an order is placed”}.

As for Claim 17, SMITH discloses the method of Claim 16, further comprising dispatching an electronic mail message to one of the suppliers and the recipient the electronic mail messages relating changes and entries submitted to via the graphical user interface {Column 3, Lines 58-61, wherein this reads over “the method then generates a search reply message containing any product substantially matching the product configuration data, and sends the reply message to the user”}

As for Claim 18, SMITH discloses the method of Claim 16, wherein displaying the shipping status includes displaying a part number, a shipping date, and a receipt date of each of the final set of parts {Column 3, Lines 25-28, wherein this reads over “real-time status can be provided as requested or automatically in accordance with the occurrence of a predefined or significant event”}

As for Claim 19, SMITH discloses the method of Claim 18, wherein displaying the shipping status further includes displaying discrepancy information on parts received but found to be inadequate by at least one of recipient and the receiving supplier {Column 19, Lines 50-51, wherein this reads over “workflow manager 622 also provides order status information to status module 1156”}.

As for Claim 20, SMITH discloses the method of Claim 18, further comprising receiving repair information on parts being returned to one of the suppliers for repair using a return part panel of each graphical user interface {Column 19, Lines 38-41, wherein this reads over “enterprise ordering system 1158 also sends the item number and order validation information to a dealer 1160 that either has the selected vehicle or will take the delivery of the vehicle to the consumer”}.

As for Claim 21, SMITH discloses the method of Claim 20, further comprising receiving, using the statement of work panel, the repair information from the return part panel and displaying the repair information {Column 8, Lines 28-31, wherein this reads over “configuration and pricing database 324 contains data on vehicle models and the available configuration and options that may be specified by the consumer”}.

As for Claim 22, SMITH discloses the method of Claim 18, further comprising receiving, using a replacement part panel of each graphical user interface, information on parts to be replaced {See Fig. 3, Element 310 and Column 7, Lines 37-40, wherein this reads over “system 310 in particular provides on-line customers the ability to enter vehicle search criteria, and search for the vehicle in the dealership inventory and in-process”}.

As for Claim 23, SMITH discloses the method of Claim 22, further comprising receiving, using the statement of work panel, the replacement information from the replacement part panel and displaying the replacement information {Column 7, Lines 40-43, wherein this reads over “if the search does not yield a vehicle satisfying the search criteria, then a customer may search for near match vehicles or place a custom order for the desired vehicle”}.

As for Claim 24, SMITH discloses the method of Claim 16, further comprising displaying, using a shipments in transit panel, the shipping status of parts sent by the suppliers but not yet received {See Fig. 1, Element 20 and Column 6, Lines 30-34, wherein this reads over “dealer inventory and “in-process” product inventory are then searched to locate products that matched or substantially matched the consumer selected product configuration, as shown in block 20”}.

As for Claim 25, SMITH discloses the method of Claim 16, further comprising receiving revised completion dates, using an estimated completion date panel of each graphical user interface, and displaying the revised completion date using the statement of work panel {See Fig. 1, Element 30 and Column 6, Lines 51-52, wherein this reads over “the consumer is then provided an estimated product delivery date”}.

As for Claim 26, SMITH discloses the method of Claim 16, further comprising displaying, using a delinquency panel of each graphical user interface, a list of late parts that have not been delivered by a due date {Column 4, Lines 3-5, wherein this reads over “the inventory database contains vehicles on the order bank, in-production, in-transit, and in-inventory at the dealership”}.

As for Claim 27, SMITH discloses the method of Claim 16, further comprising displaying, using a proposed configuration panel of each graphical user interface, a proposed configuration agreed to by at least one supplier {Column 3, Lines 44-47, wherein this reads over “the locate server is further operable to generate a search reply message containing the matching products and return the search reply message to the locate client process”}.

As for Claim 28, SMITH discloses the method of Claim 27, further comprising changing the proposed configuration, adding due dates for the parts of the proposed configuration, and finalizing the proposed configuration using a configuration release panel of each graphical user interface {Column 3, Lines 48-51, wherein this reads over “an online method of locating consumer product having specific configuration in an enterprise production pipeline and inventory is provided”}.

As for Claim 29, SMITH discloses the method of Claim 28, further comprising dispatching an electronic mail message relating to the proposed configuration and the final configuration {Column 3, Lines 58-61, wherein this reads over “the method then generates a search reply message containing any product substantially matching the product configuration data, and sends the search reply message to the user”}.

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

I. U.S. Patent:

- 1) U.S. Patent No. 6,895,388 (SMITH) is cited to teach a communication schema of online system and method of locating consumer product in the enterprise product pipeline,
- 2) U.S. Patent No. 6,654,726 (HANZEK) is cited to teach a communication schema of online system and method of status inquiry and tracking related to orders for consumer product having specific configurations, and
- 3) U.S. Patent No. 6,728,685 (AHLUWALIA) is cited to teach a communication schema of online reporting system and method related to online orders for consumer products having specific configurations.


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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cang (James) G. Thai whose telephone number is (571) 272-6499. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30 AM - 3:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Weiss can be reached on (571) 272-6812. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

CGT
7/5/05



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